

Message Text

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65

ACTION NEA-10

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 FEA-01 ERDA-07 AID-05 CEA-01 CIAE-00

CIEP-02 COME-00 DODE-00 EB-07 FPC-01 H-02 INR-07

INT-05 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 OMB-01 PM-04 USIA-15

SAM-01 OES-05 SP-02 SS-15 STR-04 TRSE-00 PA-02 PRS-01

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R 220837Z JAN 76

FM AMEMBASSY KUWAIT

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 4534

INFO AMEMBASSY ABU DHABI

AMCONSUL DHAHRAN

AMEMBASSY DOHA

AMEMBASSY JIDDA

AMEMBASSY TEHRAN

USINT BAGHDAD

UNCLAS KUWAIT 0351

E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: ENRG KU

SUBJECT: MINISTER OF OIL ON KUWAIT OIL RESERVES

1. IN RECENT INTERVIEW WITH LOCAL MAGAZINE "NAHDA", MINISTER OF OIL KAZEMI REVEALED THAT A SECOND LAYER OF OIL HAS BEEN DISCOVERED UNDER THE BURGAN FIELD AND ADDED THAT A THIRD LAYER MIGHT ALSO EXIST. HE INDICATED THAT THE NEW DISCOVERIES COULD BE EQUAL TO THE PRESENTLY KNOWN RESERVES WHICH ARE THOUGHT TO BE ON THE ORDER OF AT LEAST 50 BILLION BARRELS. HE ADDED THAT IF OIL PRODUCTION IS MAINTAINED AT ITS PRESENT LEVEL OF AROUND 2 MILLION BPD, THEN EXISTING OIL RESERVES WILL LAST ABOUT SEVENTY TO EIGHTY YEARS.

2. COMMENT: WE HAVE NOT YET BEEN ABLE TO DISCUSS KAZEMI'S STATEMENTS WITH KNOWLEDGEABLE OIL COMPANY OR GOK OFFICIALS. NORMALLY OIL RESERVES ARE TREATED BY GOK AS A HIGHLY CLASSIFIED SUBJECT.

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IT TRUE, HOWEVER, THAT ALTHOUGH KUWAIT HAS BEEN EXPLORED THOROUGHLY

HORIZONTALLY, THERE HAS BEEN VERY LITTLE EXPLORATION BELOW EXISTING
RELATIVELY SHALLOW WELLS. QUALIFIED OIL PEOPLE HERE DO BELIEVE
THAT THERE ARE REASONABLY GOOD PROSPECTS THAT HYDROCARBON DEPOSITS
EXIST BENEATH BURGAN, BUT THEY ASSUME THAT IF HYDROCARBONS EXIST IT
WILL BE IN THE FORM OF GAS. AS DEPARTMENT AWARE KUWAIT OIL COMPANY
HAS BEGUN MAJOR EFFORT TO LOOK FOR GAS; WORK EXPECTED TO BEGIN SOON
ON DEEP (18,000 - 25,000 FEET) WELL UNDER BURGAN. IF KAZEMI IS
CORRECT, KUWAIT'S ALREADY LARGE OIL RESERVES COULD BE SIGNIFIC-
ANTLY LARGER THAN WE HAD BELIEVED.
MAU

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